

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ARA-06 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01
 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
 USIA-06 SAJ-01 ACDA-07 OMB-01 /073 W
 -----232006Z 110166 /44

R 232020Z DEC 76
FM AMEMBASSY PARIS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8243
INFO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO
AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
AMEMBASSY ROME
AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST
AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST
AMEMBASSY BELGRADE
AMEMBASSY PRAGUE
AMEMBASSY SOFIA
AMCONSUL BORDEAUX
AMCONSUL MARSEILLE
AMCONSUL MARTINIQUE
AMCONSUL LYON
AMCONSUL NICE
AMCONSUL STRASBOURG

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 PARIS 37899

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, PINT, FR, UR, CI
SUBJECT: PCF REACTION TO CORVALAN/BUKAVSKY EXCHANGE

SUMMARY: PCF SECRETARY GENERAL GEORGES MARCHAIS, SPEAK-
ING ON DECEMBER 20, QUALIFIED THE EXCHANGE AS "LAMENT-
ABLE" AND CRITICIZED BOTH REGIMES FOR HAVING IMPRISONED
THE TWO MEN. EMBASSY HAS LEARNED THAT MARCHAIS' STATE-
MENT WAS THE SUBJECT OF HEATED INTERNAL DEBATE WITHIN
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PCF'S POLITBURO. END SUMMARY

1. MARCHAIS' STATEMENT -- AN OPPORTUNE TIME: COMING ON
THE HEELS OF A WIDELY-WATCHED TV PROGRAM DURING WHICH
PCF SPOKESMEN DEBATED THE MERITS OF COSTA-GARVAS' FILM
"THE CONFESSION," MARCHAIS' REACTION TO THE EXCHANGE WAS

WIDELY DISCOUNTED AS YET ANOTHER PCF ATTEMPT TO CONVINCE FRENCH VOTERS THAT THE COMMUNIST TIGER HAS CHANGED HIS STALINIST SPOTS. MARCHAIS' LINE WAS TOUGH AND RELATIVELY UNSPARING OF THE SOVIET UNION, BUT HE WAS AT PAINS TO REFUSE ANY OVERLY DIRECT ATTACK ON THE SOVIET REGIME. EMBASSY TRANSLATION FOLLOWS:

"TWO MEN, TWO POLITICAL PRISONERS, HAVE JUST BEEN THE OBJECT OF A LAMENTABLE EXCHANGE.

CORVALAN WAS IMPRISONED IN SPITE OF HAVING UNDERTAKEN A PERFECTLY LEGAL ACTION; BUKOVSKY WAS ALSO IMPRISONED FOR HAVING EXPRESSED OPINIONS CONTRARY TO THOSE OF THE SOVIET GOVERNMENT.

WE, WHO ARE AGAINST ALL IMPRISONMENT FOR 'OFFENSES TO PUBLIC OPINION,' AGAINST ALL LIMITS ON THE LIBERTY OF EXPRESSION, AGAINST THE SUBSTITUTION OF ARBITRARINESS FOR THE DEMOCRATIC RULES OF POLITICAL LIFE, WE BELIEVE CONSEQUENTLY THAT THE LIBERATION OF CORVALAN AND BUKOVSKY IS AN ACT OF ELEMENTARY JUSTICE.

... WE JUDGE INADMISSABLE, THEN, IN WHATEVER COUNTRY IT MAY BE THAT MEN FIND THEMSELVES PLACED BEFORE AN INTOLERABLE ALTERNATIVE -- PRISON OR EXILE.

WE ALSO JUDGE INADMISSABLE THE BARGAINING BETWEEN A SOCIALIST COUNTRY AND A FASCIST COUNTRY OVER THE

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FATE OF TWO MEN HARASSED FOR HAVING EXERCISED THE INALIENABLE RIGHTS OF ALL HUMAN BEINGS.

DECIDEDLY EVERYTHING CONFIRMS THAT THE POLICIES, THE OBJECTIVES, THE METHODS -- AND I WOULD SAY THE IDEALS -- DEFINED BY THE XXII CONGRESS OF THE PCF ARE OF DECISIVE IMPORTANCE FOR THE WORKERS OF OUR COUNTRY BECAUSE THEY CALL FOR A STRUGGLE LEADING TO A SOCIALISM WHICH WILL NOT BEND ON HUMAN LIBERTIES."

2. THE POLITBURO: IN A TEN PARAGRAPH DECLARATION THE PCF'S POLITBURO WENT NOT ONE STEP BEYOND WHAT IT INSISTED LATER WAS "AN EVEN HANDED DISAPPROVAL OF THE ARBITRARY," BUT THE TWO ESSENTIAL PARAGRAPHS OFFERED DIFFERENT NUANCES:

-- "THE FRENCH COMMUNIST PARTY WHICH, SINCE THE

FASCIST COUP D'ETAT IN CHILE HAS MANIFESTED
ITS ACTIVE SOLIDARITY WITH THE DEMOCRATS AND
THE PEOPLE OF CHILE AND WHICH HAS STRUGGLED
TO TEAR LUIS CORVALAN FROM THE HANDS OF
PINOCHET, NOTES WITH SATISFACTION HIS LIBERA-
TION.

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 02 PARIS 37899

THE FRENCH COMMUNIST PARTY WHICH ACTED FOR THE
LIBERATION OF VLADIMIR BUKOVSKY,
INDICTED FOR HAVING BELIEVED IN IDEAS OPPOSED TO

THOSE OF THE SOVIET GOVERNMENT, EQUALLY NOTES
WITH SATISFACTION HIS LIBERATION."

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3. THE INTERNAL DEBATE: STUNG BY CHARGES THAT IT HAD
FAILED TO GIVE A CONVINCING PICTURE OF A PARTY NOW AND
NEWLY FREED OF ITS STALINIST PAST DURING THE DEBATE OVER
COSTA-GARVIS' FILM, THE PCF POLITBURO, WHICH IS SAID TO
HAVE HAD NO PRIOR KNOWLEDGE OF THE EXCHANGE, MET IN
EXTRAORDINARY SESSION ON SATURDAY DECEMBER 18 TO HAMMER
OUT ITS POSITION. THE MOST VOCIFEROUS OPPOSITION TO ANY
STATEMENT WAS LED BY PCF "FOREIGN SECRETARY" JEAN
KANAPA WHO HAD BEEN THE SUBJECT OF GREAT SCORN IN THE
FRENCH PRESS THAT WEEK FOR HIS DECLARATIONS THAT THE
FRENCH COMMUNISTS KNEW NOTHING OF THE STALINIST EXCESSES.
MARCHAIS, WHO RECEIVED STRONG SUPPORT FROM AN UNEXPECTED
SOURCE, HUMANITE DIRECTOR ROLAND LEROY, TOOK THE OPPOSITE
TACK ARGUING FOR AN IMMEDIATE "PLAGUE-ON-BOTH-YOUR-
HOUSES" STATEMENT AND IS SAID TO HAVE CARRIED THE DAY
BY TELLING THE POLITBURO THAT PCF CREDIBILITY WAS ON THE
LINE WITH REGARD TO THE EXCHANGE. HE EVIDENTLY WON HIS
POINT BY SEVERAL SOURCES HAVE TOLD US THAT THE POLITBUROS
STORMY MEETING TOOK OVER FOUR HOURS.
HARLAN

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